

January 22, 2019

Department of Public Works Portable Fire Hydrant Meter Policy & Procedures

Purpose

This policy defines the Department of Public Works procedures for Contractors who desire to purchase water on a temporary basis to support their operations. This policy and procedures replace Policy No. 001-07 “Temporary Water using Fire Hydrants for Construction Sites” without a date or signature. Fire Departments are exempt from this policy when conducting fire fighting operations.

Background

The Department of Public Works (DPW) provides water service to over 15,000 residents and businesses daily. In 2018, the department implemented a Hydrant Security Program by installing locking devices on over 600 hydrants. These devices are necessary to protect the water system and conserve water by preventing unauthorized hydrant use. Contractors may not understand the possible negative water system impact when requesting bulk water purchase through a hydrant water meter. Contractors often create a hydraulic shock otherwise known as a “water hammer” within the water distribution system. This pressure surge or wave within the water pipe is created when an individual unknowingly forces the water to stop or change direction as a result of suddenly opening or closing a fire hydrant. The water hammer can cause a catastrophic failure in the distribution system resulting in water outages to our water customers and loss of revenue due to cost of emergency repairs.

The department may grant use of a hydrant as an accessible water source on a temporary basis. This permitted use with a water hydrant meter assures contractors can use the City’s water service for their daily business operations while still protecting the quality of our water supply.

Fire Hydrant Use as an Accessible Water Source Procedures

1. Fire hydrant meters are for use with fire hydrants only - no other connections are allowed under any circumstances. Fire hydrant meters will not be issued for use at building construction sites where a water system which has been accepted for operation and maintenance by the City is available. A permanent tap and meter installation will be required.
2. Fire hydrant meters may be issued to the following categories of contractors and businesses: Master Plumbers, Underground Utility Contractors, Brick/Block Masons, Well Drilling Contractors, Lawn and Garden Services, Paving Contractors, and Demolition Contractors, and others as determined by DPW.

**Department of Public Works
Fire Hydrant Meter Policy & Procedures**

3. Fire hydrant meters shall be issued to the specific party who will utilize the meter and who will be responsible for the meter and payment for water usage. No third-party billing will be allowed.
4. The requestor will provide the City of Aberdeen with a cashier's check in the amount of \$3500.00 that will cover the replacement of the hydrant if it is damaged during the temporary use. This fee will only cover the hydrant specified for the job site and is not transferable. At the conclusion of the job, the Director of Public Works (Director) or his representative will inspect the hydrant and either release the deposit or take the cashier's check to replace the hydrant. The Director or his representative's decision in this matter shall be final.
5. The party to be issued the fire hydrant meter and permit shall be required to sign a statement at the end of this Policy & Procedure acknowledging and accepting their responsibilities when being issued a permit. The requestor shall be responsible for all water use whether intentional or unintentional (breaks, other than permitted uses, etc). Wanton or willful wasting of water will result in a permanent suspension of this privilege. A representative for the Director shall train the requestor in the proper operation of the hydrant. Only those individuals trained and noted on the temporary meter request form shall be allowed to operate the hydrant.
6. Hydrant meters issued by City of Aberdeen can only be used within the City of Aberdeen's cooperate limits and areas where annexation to the City has been approved by the City Council. The requestor will pay a deposit of \$500.00 for a ¾-inch meter. This is the maximum size allowed to be connected to a fire hydrant. The requestor may only fill tanker trucks at yard hydrant located at the DPW Maintenance Shop, 341 Michaels Lane, Aberdeen, MD between the hours of 7:30 am to 3:00 pm from Monday to Friday
7. Meters are issued for periods of six (6) months. At the end of the six-month period, the meter must be returned, and a new meter issued. The DPW Maintenance shop will attempt to notify the customer by letter, one month prior to the six (6) month exchange date. Failure to exchange a meter assembly during the exchange month will result in a \$150.00 per month late exchange fee until the meter is exchanged, returned, or confiscated. In addition, if the account is delinquent, a replacement meter will not be issued until the balance is paid in full. Any questions regarding the exchange or return of the meter should be directed to the DPW Maintenance Shop at 410-272-1414. All meter exchanges or returns shall be conducted at 341 Michaels Lane - Monday thru Friday between 7:30 AM to 3:00 PM.
8. No credits for water usage charges will be allowed against the deposit. The deposit will be returned when the assembly is returned, and any water usage and all late charges have been paid in full.
9. Fire hydrant meter users shall be billed at the end of each month. Monthly charges may include water usage, a base meter fee, late fees, and any damages or penalties incurred by the customer for non-compliance to the policy.

Department of Public Works
Fire Hydrant Meter Policy & Procedures

10. Fire hydrant meter readings are to be reported on a monthly basis via email between the 20th and the 25th day of each month. All information should be emailed to dwetherell@aberdeemmd.gov. The company's name, contact name, return phone number, meter number (which is stamped on top of the lid), and the meter reading with all digits from left to right shall be reported. Failure to provide readings within the specified dates may result in a \$25.00 per day fee chargeable after the 26th day of each month. Any questions related to reporting of meter reads should be directed to 410-272-1600 x 219.
11. Contractors shall utilize an approved fire hydrant wrench with the meter assembly to operate hydrants; no other tools or methods of operation are allowed. The meter assembly needs to be supported between the meter, backflow, and at least 12" off the ground when attached to a fire hydrant. The hydrant shall be flushed approximately 1-2 minutes before attaching the meter assembly to avoid damage to the meter.
12. Contractors who return damaged meter assemblies to the Maintenance Shop will be charged the actual cost of repair or a minimum repair charge of \$100.00, whichever is greater. Damaged condition shall mean any wear or deterioration, beyond the wear to be expected from normal use and operation of the assembly.
13. Contractors who have a past due balance will not be issued new meters or permits until the account balance is current. In addition, all fire hydrant meter permits issued will be revoked and the meter will be confiscated.
14. Fire hydrant meters are to be made available to City of Aberdeen DPW Staff upon demand for inspection and verification of reported readings. Failure to produce a meter upon demand will result in revocation of the fire hydrant meter permit and confiscation of the meter.
15. The City shall have the authority to refuse service to contractors who are found to be chronic violators of the Fire Hydrant Meter Policy. Violations include the failure to report meter readings, exchange the meters on time and make regular invoice payments.
16. In the event of the theft of an issued unit, a police report must be filed. Customer shall notify the Department of Public Works in writing and provide a copy of the police report in order to halt the monthly billing on the meter. Customer will forfeit the existing deposit. If a replacement meter is needed, a new deposit will have to be paid and the account made current prior to the new meter being issued.
17. For questions regarding the monthly invoice or refund of deposit, contact the Department of Public Works Admin Assistant, Denise Wetherell. 410-272-1600 x 219.

Kyle E. Torster, P.E.
Director of Public Works

Cc: Finance Director

**Department of Public Works
Fire Hydrant Meter Policy & Procedures**

Fire Hydrant Meter Water & Bulk Tanker Fees

The contractor will be billed at the Base Rate Plus Actual Water Usage for a hydrant meter.

Hydrant Water Meter Deposit	\$500.00	
Hydrant Damage Deposit	\$3,500.00	
Base Hydrant Meter Fee – Per Month	\$100.00	
Base Hydrant Meter Fee – Daily (up to one week)	\$25.00	
Hydrant – First 3,500 gallons	\$19.68	
Hydrant – Each 1,000 gallons over 3,500 gallons	\$5.94	
Failure to exchange meter after six months (per month)	\$150.00	
Failure to return wrench with the meter (same day)	\$90.00	
Meter Read Failure >26 th day of the month (per day)	\$25.00	
Tampering with, disassembly of, or an inability to obtain a reading on the meter in order to bill consumption whether by damage, failure to report, or theft of the device	First offense:	\$50.00
	Second offense:	\$200.00
	Third offense and any additional:	\$500.00
Miscellaneous damage to the device – greater of	\$100.00 or replacement cost	
Loss or theft of the device or missing parts	Actual replacement value	
Bulk Water Tanker Purchase per load		
• Up to 5,000 gallons	\$35.00	
• 5,000 to 10,000 gallons	\$70.00	

Signature _____ **Date** _____

Print Name _____

Company _____